



# Village of Lancaster

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown  
"Healthy, Historic, Holistic"



REDC Region: Western New York  
Program: NY Forward  
Municipality Name: Village of Lancaster  
Downtown Name: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown  
County: Erie County  
Contact: Lynne Ruda  
Title: Village of Lancaster, Mayor  
Email: [lruda@lancastervillage.org](mailto:lruda@lancastervillage.org)



NY Forward



# Geographic Area & Justification

NY Forward Boundary

Historic Central Business District

## Geographic Area

The Village of Lancaster (population 10,027) is the third oldest incorporated village in Erie County, with a historic downtown core that serves as the municipal center for both the Village and the Town of Lancaster. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown boundary is an 83-acre space (outlined in red on the map) that encompasses the historic 31-acre Central Business District (this area is shown in gray). To the north, the area is bound by St. Joseph's Street. Church Street marks the eastern boundary. The area extends south to Colonial Avenue, and west towards Aurora Street. This downtown boundary is defined by an approximate five-minute walk from the epicenter of the Village core. This area reflects a vibrant, walkable downtown which retains the historical character of the Historic District within its boundaries, and provides new opportunities for housing, retail, cultural, and entertainment opportunities.

## Justification

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown is central to the revitalization of the Village of Lancaster. Once known as a manufacturing and milling community, the Village suffered great losses from a number of fires and floods at the start of the twentieth century. Attempts to rebuild the village center during the latter half of the twentieth century with urban renewal funding and initiatives resulted in a great disruption to the downtown core and village life. For fifty years, the Village remained stagnant, with little growth or development.







## Healthy

Health and wellness of our residents is a key factor when making decisions. **Providing equitable opportunities for fitness, walkability, and bikeability** is a top priority for residents and visitors. Preserving our environment and embracing climate smart initiatives plays a key role in creating a **healthy and sustainable** community both now and into the future.

*"Lancaster continues to pursue opportunities to make their community (and our Region) stronger through these people focused projects that provide opportunities to enhance the Historical Villages charm, build density through diverse housing choices, expanded economic development opportunities, and increase resilience in the Region."*

*~Jason Kulaszewski, University at Buffalo Regional Institute*

## Historic

At the same time, the Village will continue to celebrate its historic past. Lancaster boasts an active Historic Preservation Commission and Historical Society, as well as two Historic Districts and multiple individual buildings on the National Register of Historic Places. The Lancaster community prioritizes the preservation of these buildings and works to provide educational opportunities to learn more about the local historic structures and people. The Village is a New York State Certified Local Government, further signifying their commitment to historic preservation.

## Holistic

To create a welcoming community, the Village strongly believes that a holistic approach is necessary for all revitalization efforts. Committee Members and the Village Board conduct regular assessments of Village accomplishments and needs, examining equity across all sectors of the community. Design guidelines for new businesses in historic buildings ensures a uniform look throughout the Village.



## Vision Statement

*Lancaster's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown will be equitable, resilient, and sustainable, with a vibrant village center that retains its traditional historic character and walkability, while encouraging and supporting enhanced economic development, health and wellness for residents and visitors, environmentally-friendly infrastructure and practices, multimodal transportation options, and affordable housing options.*

Over the past three years, the Village has seen the beginning of a renaissance, led by collaborative efforts and careful planning. Despite challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are signs that the community is looking forward. The investments and opportunities for our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown, presented in this document, will take us from possibility to reality.

Lancaster's 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown: Healthy, Historic, and Holistic is a vision for a Village that celebrates the past, presents an inviting place to live, shop, and play today, and provides for a sustainable future for the next generations.





[illegible]

core in over 50 years. The Village of Lancaster is currently completing a major infrastructure project, installing two roundabouts, putting Pleasant Avenue West on a road diet, and installing a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon crosswalk to create a more walkable community. Additionally, the Village of Lancaster is currently finishing construction of the Cayuga Creek Park project, finally bringing greenspace to the downtown core.

*"These improvements have helped to **bolster the success of** our business and have created a **regional buzz** about Lancaster."*

The Village of Lancaster's recent success has been a result of the relationships built with organizations like the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), the University at Buffalo's Regional Institute (UBRI) and the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning. Through our past and current planning efforts, the Village of Lancaster has sought the advice and expertise of outside organizations to ensure that Village projects







align with regional goals. Currently, the Village is undergoing a zoning update, changing to form-based code, which will ensure that future development aligns with the priorities and values of the community. With the support of BridgeNY funds, the Village of Lancaster is currently investing in its infrastructure, relining and strengthening a culvert that runs under our Central Business District, ensuring the sustainability of future growth. The Village of Lancaster has also invested a tremendous amount into the sewer system, with over \$3 million spent over the past four years.



## Future Public and Private Investment

Though much progress has been made in the Village of Lancaster, there is still a tremendous amount of potential. The Village of Lancaster is currently engaged in re-zoning the downtown with a form-based approach. Through this process, the committee has had many opportunities to imagine the future of the Village of Lancaster. Through the past two semesters, the Village of Lancaster has partnered

with graduate classes from the University at Buffalo's School of Architecture and Planning. Through these semesters, the Village has yet again looked at the potential for growth and future investment and believes that there is tremendous potential to not only continue to build out the downtown core, but also to expand the business district both North on Central Ave. and West on Broadway. The existence of developable properties within the downtown area have been identified, including properties that can be utilized for varying levels of housing affordability and mixed uses. With affordable housing being a priority, the Village has taken multiple steps to start addressing equity in housing, including attending the Erie County Live Well Housing Summit and drafting an RFP for mixed use with an affordable housing element.

The Village of Lancaster's vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown continues to embrace the Climate Smart initiatives that led to their recent Climate Smart Communities Bronze designation. Future public investment includes a community Greenhouse Gas Inventory, a Government Climate Action Plan, initiating a local organic waste plan and the installation of EV charging stations. As the Village continues to grow into a tourist destination, wayfinding, supporting our Lancaster Opera House and investing in the arts will be a priority. New York State funding was allocated to a feasibility study to assess the possibility of extending the Heritage Trail from the Town of Lancaster, through the Village of Lancaster to the Town of Cheektowaga. The Village of Lancaster will be collaborating with the GBNRTC, GoBike Buffalo and surrounding municipalities on this study.



Past & Future Public Investments (Grants & Local Funds)		
Year	Project Title	Cost
2019	West Main Street Power Supply Upgrades	\$83,100
2019-2020	Sanitary Sewer Improvements	\$1,818,000
2020	Bike Lanes - Central Avenue	\$317,300
2020-2021	West Main Street Extension	\$3,206,500
2020-2021	Sanitary Sewer Improvements	\$1,307,000
2021	Purchase of Property - Future Infill & Development	\$175,000
2021	LED Streetlighting Conversion	\$1,030,000
2021	West Drullard Outdoor Fitness Center	\$99,300
2020-2022	Hadsall Park Spray Pool Improvements	\$135,000
2022	Downtown Roundabouts	\$3,933,100
2022	Cayuga Creek Park	\$1,780,000
2022	Sanitary Sewer Improvements	\$949,500
2023	Plum Bottom Creek Culvert Repairs	\$1,043,140
2023	Firefighters Park Renovation	\$470,000
Total 2019-2023		\$16,346,940



# RECENT OR IMPENDING JOB GROWTH

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown Businesses

Name	Address	Year Opened
Purely Pets	5 West Main St	2016
From the Attic	41 Central Ave	2017
Lilly Belle Meads	11 West Main St	2017
Skoob's Village Grill	50 Central Ave	2018
Gilded Maple	4 West Main St	2018
Josie's on Central	36 Central Ave	2019
Plum Bottom Hair Salon	39 Central Ave	2019
Three Dog Barber	30 Central Ave	2019
716 Dance	11 West Main St	2019
3D Comics	32 Central Ave	2020
Long Weekend	34 Central Ave	2020
Juls and Jane	31 Central Ave	2020
Black Sheep & Co.	42 Aurora St	2020
Valint's Meats	25 Central Ave	2021
After Care Nursing	5400 Broadway	2021
716 Athletics	19 West Main St	2022
Bathe	19 West Main St	2022
Gabrielle's Bakery	19 West Main St	2022
Symposium Wine Bar	19 West Main St	2022
West Main Jeweler	19 West Main St	2022

## Fostering Small Business Growth

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown is comprised of small businesses that have helped sustain continuous job growth in the Village of Lancaster. Since 2018, the Village of Lancaster has experienced the opening of an unprecedented number of unique mom and pop type businesses (see sidebar). These business openings have provided expanded and diversified job opportunities in the downtown core. As the Village continues to grow its Central Business District, more job opportunities are expected to become available.

## New Growth & Anchor Institutions

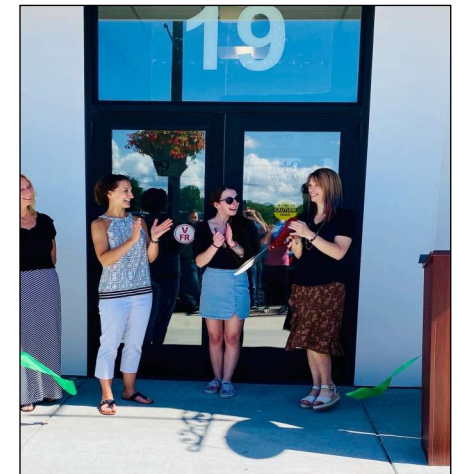
In addition to the retail businesses, AfterCare Nursing Services Inc. opened a facility in 2021, bringing in over 30 jobs into the downtown core. Performance Advantage Company, an anchor business, currently has over 20 employees. Additionally, in 2018 the Lancaster Opera House transitioned from community theatre to professional theatre and now employs over 100 professional artists, including actors, musicians, designers and technicians per season. These anchor institutions have been and will continue to be bolstered by the addition of new businesses. The proposed projects within this application will continue the upwards trend of job growth that has been occurring within the Village of Lancaster.

## Major Surrounding Employers

Downtown Lancaster is surrounded by major industrial and health care facilities that offer a variety of jobs at various skill levels. The Village's Commerce Parkway industrial area has a variety of medium to light industrial businesses, all located within a mile of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown boundary. Major employers like Amazon and the Greenfield Health and Rehabilitation Center are in the Town of Lancaster, approximately 3 and 2 miles respectively from the downtown boundary. Many of these employees who utilize public transportation would benefit from the development of the proposed mobility hub.

*"We feel that the Village has a unique group of forward-thinking staff and elected officials that work together for the betterment of our community, (a rarity in our polarized world) and that they can effectively plan and implement improvements in the public interest."*

*~Dan Sundell, Dark Forest Chocolate Makers*





# QUALITY OF LIFE

The Village of Lancaster has the tools and vision to be an attractive and livable community with diverse populations of all ages, incomes, and backgrounds. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown focuses on three key quality of life areas and strives to be *healthy, historic, and holistic*.

Providing affordable and equitable opportunities for access to healthy foods, medical care, and fitness opportunities is essential to a healthy downtown. The section below illustrates opportunities available to residents that help to build a healthy lifestyle. The proposed Masonic Building Wellness Center, the Teen Space for the Boys and Girls Club, and Wayfinding improvements will build upon current health and wellness initiatives.

As the third oldest Village in the County, the community values and respects its historic character. As evidence of this, the Village of Lancaster Historic Preservation Commission has formed two historic districts on the National Historic District Registry: the Central Avenue District (pictured on the following page) and the Broadway District. Not only is this important for preservation efforts, but also for creating a unique sense of place and strengthening economic and tourism opportunities—all which contribute to a higher quality of life. The map on the following page shows important historic elements within the core.

The Village's approach to revitalization is a holistic and inclusive one. Looking at the Village as a whole, past and current efforts seek to elevate the community and quality of life for all of its residents. As such, it is a priority to provide diversity in housing, employment, retail outlets, community and cultural opportunities to ensure the Village continues to be a place for residents of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds. The map on the following page illustrates this diversity within the core.

*"The collaborative work in the village continues to set a strong precedent for towns and villages across WNY by developing a sustainable community that puts people first. Their track record of success demonstrates a strong commitment to delivering meaningful projects to enhance the quality of life of their community."*

~Justin Booth, GoBike



## Healthy

The Village of Lancaster currently has a diverse range of healthy food choice options, recreational opportunities, and healthcare facilities. A sampling of these businesses and open spaces are shown in the map to the left. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown will expand the opportunities for healthy and sustainable lifestyles with projects that were prioritized by the community and reflect the vision statement. (for example, Masonic Building Wellness Center, the Boys and Girls Club, and Wayfinding projects).

### Accessible Food Choices

- ❖ 1 Broadway Nutrition
- ❖ 2 Save A Lot
- ❖ 3 Valint's Meats
- ❖ 4 Trinity Pantry
- ❖ 4 Flourish

### Healthcare Facilities

- ❖ 5 Concierge Dental Group
- ❖ 6 AfterCare Nursing Services Inc.

### Recreation/Outdoor Spaces

- ❖ 7 Cayuga Creek Park
- ❖ 7 Gar Galvin Trail
- ❖ 8 Boys and Girls Club
- ❖ 9 716 Dance Lab
- ❖ 10 716 Athletics
- ❖ 11 Whole Fitness and Wellness
- ❖ Firefighter's Park



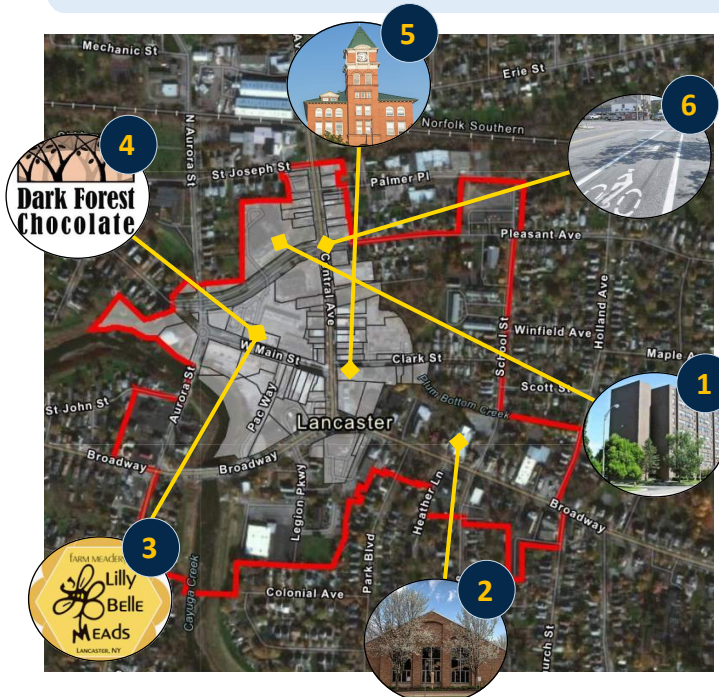
## Historic

The map on the right shows the two historic districts within the 21st Century Downtown. The sites noted are the most prominent historic buildings, with many on the National Historic Register.

As indicated in the vision statement, the community prioritizes retaining our traditional, historic character.

The following proposed projects will contribute to efforts to maintain our traditional character: 1 W. Main Street, the Boys and Girls Club, the Lancaster Historical Museum, the Lancaster Opera House, and the Masonic Building.

- 1 Lancaster Opera House and Town Hall
- 2 Potter-Eaton House (Lancaster History Museum)
- 3 Miller-Mackey Building (Boys & Girls Club)
- 4 Masonic Temple Depew Lodge #823
- 5 Clark-Lester House (Sassafras Bed & Breakfast)
- 6 Lancaster Municipal Building
- 7 Lancaster Post Office
- 8 Greater Lancaster Museum of Firefighting
- 9 NY Store
- 10 1 West Main



## Holistic

The 21st Century Downtown strives to be equitable, resilient, and sustainable in all areas. The Village values a holistic approach that considers the needs and desires of residents of all ages and abilities. Within the downtown boundaries, the *Arc of Erie County*, for adults with developmental disabilities, and *Lancaster Towers* 1, a senior living complex, offer diverse housing opportunities. Community and gathering spaces are located throughout the downtown, encouraging community members to interact and come together. Two prominent locations are the Lancaster Boys & Girls Club and the *Lancaster Public Library* 2. Unique commercial retail and service businesses operate within the downtown core, supplying residents with a diverse mix of shopping, entertainment, and dining options—all within walking distance. *Lily Belle Meads* 3 is the only farm meadery in Erie County. *Dark Forest Chocolate Makers* 4 is a unique small-batch chocolate maker, and was the first of its kind in Western New York. Arts and culture are important elements of the Village's identity. The *Lancaster Opera House* 5 and long standing businesses, such as *Twin Village Music*, embody this dedication to the arts. Planned public art murals will contribute to the Village's sense of place. The Village is committed to supporting multimodal transportation opportunities. *Bike lanes along Central Avenue* 6 and bike parking along West Main Street currently encourage bikers to explore the area. EV charging stations will be located at Cayuga Creek Park. Wayfinding improvements and the proposed Mobility Hub will make traveling to the Village of Lancaster easier for the residents, visitors, and employees.



# SUPPORTIVE LOCAL POLICIES & INITIATIVES

## Village of Lancaster Comprehensive Plan and Economic Feasibility Study

The creation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Lancaster, the Village of Lancaster and the Village of Depew and the Economic Feasibility Study that were completed in 2018 have provided guidance and a sense of direction to the leadership of the Village of Lancaster. With recommendations and a suggested timeline from both plans, the Village of Lancaster has worked systematically and aggressively to accomplish the recommendations, leading to the current revitalization in downtown Lancaster. Currently, the comprehensive plan is being reviewed to decide the next phase of opportunities for growth and economic development in the community.

## Climate Smart Initiatives

The Village of Lancaster has embraced the idea of creating a resilient, sustainable community and has worked tirelessly to find opportunities to cut energy use, reduce emissions, and adapt to climate change. A Climate Smart Task Force and a Forest Advisory Board were assembled in 2019. Consisting of municipal leaders and community members, have helped guide the Village through the many recent construction projects. The work done by these groups led the implementation



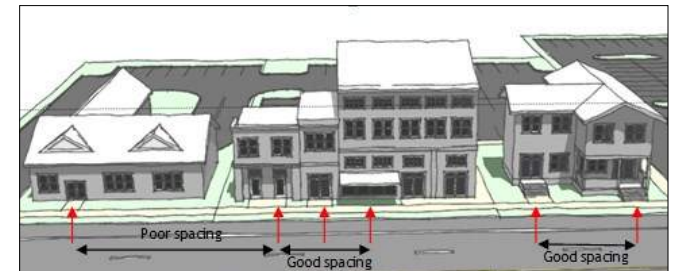
Climate Smart Actions	Year Completed
PE1 Action: CSC Pledge	2016
PE1 Action: CSC Task Force	2019
PE1 Action: CSC Coordinator	2019
PE1 Action: National/Regional Climate Program	2021
PE1 Action: Partnerships with Other Entities	2022
PE2 Action: Government Operations GHG Inventory	2021
PE3 Action: Government Building Energy Audits	2017
PE3 Action: Interior Lighting Upgrades	2019-2022
PE3 Action: HVAC Upgrades	2019
PE3 Action: Benchmarking - Municipal Buildings	2021
PE3 Action: LED Street Lights	2021
PE3 Action: Energy Code Enforcement Training	2021
PE6 Action: Complete Streets Policy	2022
PE6 Action: Infrastructure for Biking & Walking	2021
PE6 Action: Traffic Calming	2021
PE6 Action: Local Forestry Program	2019-2022
PE7 Action: Climate Vulnerability Assessment	2021
PE7 Action: Climate-resilient Hazard Mitigation Plan	2021
PE7 Action: Shade Structures Policy	2022
PE9 Action: Social Media	2021-2022

of rain gardens, the adoption of **Complete Streets and Shade Structure Policies**, and

encouraged opportunities to inventory and reduce emissions. The Village of Lancaster has recently been **designated as a Bronze Climate Smart Community and is one of only three communities that has the bronze designation in the Western New York Region** (see completed actions in the sidebar). A major advocate of climate smart initiatives, the mayor serves on the Environmental Management Council for Erie County and also created a new Climate Smart Committee, which she chairs, for the Erie County Association of Governments. In addition to the Bronze Certification, the Village of Lancaster has been designated a **Tree City USA community for three consecutive years** and was also named a **NYSERDA Clean Energy Community**.

## Mixed Use Zoning Districts

The Village is currently in the process of **developing three distinct mixed-use zoning districts that will take a more form-based approach**. Design standards will address building materials and transparency, height transitions to neighborhoods, and landscaping requirements to focus on building form and design, rather than use. **These standards will promote high quality development within and around the Village's downtown**, ensuring consistency with the community's character and aesthetic. While these standards will promote the Village's historic nature, it will also provide flexibility for architectural innovation that will further the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown vision.



# PUBLIC SUPPORT

The Village of Lancaster's vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown is a reflection of the numerous public outreach opportunities that have taken place over the last five years. In preparation for this NY Forward application, a public survey was conducted that received over 200 responses. The survey included questions that asked community members about their priorities and values within the downtown and ideas for change. A public meeting for the NY Forward Application involved over 30 community members where these ideas were presented and discussed. The vision statement on page one is a reflection of the community's desires and wishes expressed through survey responses and at the public meeting.



The Village of Lancaster is continuously looking toward the future and consistently engages its residents and the community. More recently, the Village has begun updating its zoning code to reflect a form based approach, as discussed on the previous page. Through this process, the Village has actively engaged the community through a **visual preference survey** and through a public information and engagement meeting (about 40 participants). As another recent example, the **Roundabout project** had a set of three public meetings and received over 1,000 responses to the survey that was sent out to the community. The West Main St. Project also provided opportunities for public comment through a series of public meetings. The Village prioritizes a **community driven planning approach** and the feedback received from these meetings was also considered through the development of this application.

Over the last several years, the Village of Lancaster has worked to improve communication and has an active Facebook page and Instagram account. A new, easier to navigate website is currently being designed, which allows residents to sign up for email updates from the Village. A paper newsletter is mailed out to residents three times a year and keeps everyone updated regardless of how much they use technology. In addition to public meetings, social media and the newsletter, the mayor regularly presents at the Lancaster Library, updating the public on the projects and initiatives of the Village and answering the questions of the residents. These events are livestreamed to Facebook to allow residents to view the presentation even if they are not available at that date or time. Additionally, the Village Board often holds public hearings regarding policies that are being adopted.



**VILLAGE OF LANCASTER**  
**Downtown Development Strategy**  
**Open House**  
**May 16, 2018, 6:00 p.m.— 7:30 p.m.**  
Village Hall, 5423 Broadway, Lancaster, NY

You are invited to attend an Open House to learn about the **Downtown Lancaster Development Strategy** including:

- Concept redevelopment plans for Downtown sites and streets;
- Downtown marketing strategies; and
- Goals and recommendations for revitalization.

**Who Should Attend:** Residents, businesses, property owners or anyone with an interest in revitalizing Downtown Lancaster!







# Transformative Opportunities & Readiness

## PROJECTS

- 1 1 W. Main Street
- 2 Lancaster Boys and Girls Club
- 3 Central Ave. Streetscape Extension
- 4 Lancaster Historical Museum
- 5 Lancaster Opera House
- 6 Masonic Building
- 7 Mobility Hub
- 8 Wayfinding (Village Wide)





# Project 1

## 1 West Main Street

Healthy  
Historic  
Holistic

Project Sponsors: Private Owner  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$912,620  
Funding Match Possibilities: Private funds



### Exterior Improvements

New Storefront/Demo of Old	\$	175,000
Handicap Entrance Ramp at Main Street	\$	40,000
Small Flat Roof Replacement	\$	37,620
Soffit	\$	15,000

**Subtotal** \$ **267,620**

### Interior Improvements

1st Floor Shell Space Demo	\$	15,000
1st Floor Shell Space Remodel	\$	55,000
Electrical Improvements	\$	100,000
New Elevator	\$	350,000
3rd Floor Shell Space Improvements	\$	65,000
1st Floor Handicap Accessible Restrooms	\$	30,000
3rd Floor Handicap Accessible Restrooms	\$	30,000

**Subtotal** \$ **645,000**

**Total** \$ **912,620**

One West Main Street sits at the heart of the Village's Downtown on the corner of Central Avenue and West Main Street. The building is an anchor for the downtown core, making it a priority for revitalization efforts. Making this a productive, active space will foster growth in the surrounding area.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building holds historical significance and contributes to the historic character and nature of the Village's core. Due to the building's age and design, improvements are necessary to make the building a functional and accessible space for both incoming businesses and diverse users. While unique opportunities and businesses have shown interest in the building, interior and exterior improvements are needed to support business ventures and the community.

The property owner has an existing conditions analysis and site design plans completed. Needed improvements to make the space "site ready" and accessible are ready to be started once funding is fully secured.

## ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Attracting a mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for community use and employment



Supporting a diverse population with diverse housing & employment opportunities



Growing the local property tax base

# Project 2

## Lancaster Boys & Girls Club

Healthy   
Historic   
Holistic 

Project Sponsors: Boys & Girls Club (Nonprofit)  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$706,875  
Funding Match Possibilities: DASNY Funds (\$50,000), Private Funds



Current Storage Space



New Teen Center

### Exterior Improvements

Flat roof roofing (~7550 square feet)	\$	188,750
Roofing for Main Building	\$	158,400
7 New Windows at 2nd Floor Game Room/Operable	\$	19,000
North Side Soffit Improvements	\$	35,000
Paint Entire Building	\$	93,225
Drainage/Downspouts	\$	20,000
West Entrance Improvements	\$	25,000
East Entrance Handicap Accessibility	\$	10,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>549,375</b>

### Interior Improvements

Remove Old Gas Heater - 2nd Floor Game Room	\$	2,000
Enclose Heating Equipment - 2nd Floor Game Room	\$	3,500
New Mag. Lock, Crash Bar & Fire Doors (2 Locations)	\$	24,000
Men's Locker Room Improvements	\$	12,000
New Program Space / New Fire Door Entrance	\$	28,000
Upgrade Electrical Service/Install Additional Service	\$	88,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>157,500</b>

**Total** \$ **706,875**

The Boys & Girls Club of Lancaster is located in the historic Miller-Mackey House (established 1905). Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the building not only contributes to the Village's historic character, but exposes youth to the importance of historic preservation. Over the years, stress to the building has contributed to the deterioration of the building—causing concerns for safety and for the preservation of the building. The Club seeks to make interior and exterior repairs that will restore the integrity and safety of this historic building.

Further, the Club plans to retrofit an existing storage area into a dedicated Teen Center. With the fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and counselors have struggled with ways to help teenagers cope with daily pressures now more than ever. This proposed teen center can help our youth to develop positive relationships and can positively impact their mental health and wellness.

### ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Supporting a diverse population with diverse housing & employment opportunities



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality



# Project 3

## Central Ave. Streetscape Ext.

Healthy ✓  
Historic  
Holistic ✓

Project Sponsors: Village of Lancaster  
Readiness Indicators: Site Design and Plans  
Estimated Project Cost: \$282,625  
Funding Match Possibilities: Village Funds

Streetscapes are integral to the character and feel of a given area. By enhancing public spaces along sidewalks and the street, we can create an atmosphere that encourages people to walk, bike, and explore the public realm. Central Avenue is a key corridor in the Village's Downtown, housing much of the area's retail spaces and services. Streetscape improvements will help to make this area a destination.

This area is also the site of a new roundabout in the Village. The removal of the traffic light from this intersection will expand the business district northward and create a more desirable gateway into the downtown area.



Item Description	EST. PRICE
Unclassified Excavation/Disposal	\$ 4,200.00
Decorative Light Poles with One Luminaire	\$ 90,000.00
Precast Decorative Light Pole Foundation	\$ 22,500.00
Pole Riser	\$ 200.00
Utility Company Connection	\$ 800.00
Furnish/Install PVC Conduit off Structure (Electric)	\$ 25,000.00
Insulated Conductor No. 8	\$ 30,000.00
Ground Wire Number 10 AWG	\$ 8,400.00
Ground Rod	\$ 2,250.00
Sand Backfill	\$ 1,530.00
Topsoil - Roadside	\$ 2,035.00
Turf Establishment - Roadside	\$ 1,780.00
Subbase Course, Type 2	\$ 5,980.00
Decorate Concrete Sidewalks/Regular Driveway aprons	\$ 57,950.00
<b>Total Construction Cost</b>	<b>\$252,625.00</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>\$30,000.00</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 282,625.00</b>

### ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by creating walkable development patterns



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality



# Project 4

## Lancaster Historical Museum

Healthy  
Historic  
Holistic

Project Sponsors: Lancaster Historical Society (Nonprofit)  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$712,000  
Funding Match Possibilities: Private Funds

The Lancaster Historical Society and Museum is a tourist attraction located downtown in the heart of the Village of Lancaster. This building houses some of the most treasured artifacts of Lancaster's history, and offers visitors a look at the history of Lancaster and its importance in shaping today's community. The non-profit Lancaster Historical Society, located in the Historical Museum, assists with preservation and planning activities. The NY Forward funding will enable building restoration necessary to ensure the continuation of preserving our past and educating people in the future. This will include addressing mobility issues that limit access to senior visitors. Further, deterioration of doors, windows and the stairs need immediate maintenance to prevent the building from falling into disrepair.



# LANCASTER HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### Improvements

Replaces Asbestos Tiles in Basement	\$	150,000
Replace Basement Windows	\$	10,000
Elevator Addition for Accessibility	\$	180,000
Repair Existing Sidewalk	\$	15,000
Replace Basement Lights with LEDs	\$	2,500
Replace 2nd Floor Lights with LEDs	\$	4,500
Replace Carpet on Staircase and 1st and 2nd Floors	\$	25,000
Security System for Building	\$	20,000
Replace Outdoor Sprinkler System	\$	12,500
Replace Eaves	\$	125,000
Repair Back Porch and Stairs	\$	50,000
Accessible Toilet Room Renovations	\$	60,000
Replace Outdoor Lights with LEDs	\$	7,500
Public Area Interior Finishes	\$	35,000
Repair Stairs to the Attic	\$	12,500
Replace Lights in the Attic	\$	5,000
Replace Side Door	\$	2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>712,000</b>



### ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Attracting a mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for community use and employment



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality

# Project 5

## Lancaster Opera House

Healthy  
Historic  
Holistic

Project Sponsors: Nonprofit Organization  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$1,552,475  
Funding Match Opportunities: Erie County Cultural Capital Fund, Capital Campaign

Built in 1897, the Lancaster Opera House is one of only a few such Town Hall Opera Houses left in the country and a key cultural institution in Lancaster. A major restoration was completed as a Bicentennial project in 1975, and in 1981 the Lancaster, NY Opera House, Inc. was incorporated as a 501(c)(3). Since 1981, the Lancaster Opera House has produced plays, musicals, concerts, films and hosted weddings, public meetings, and other ceremonies. Approximately 30,000 people attend events at the Lancaster Opera House every year. The Lancaster Opera House believes in finding opportunities to bring the arts to everyone and participates in the ARTS ACCESS program, providing complimentary tickets to income qualifying families. Additionally, they work to engage young people by hosting an educational summer camp for young performing artists.

The Lancaster Opera House has been an important part of the revitalization of the Village of Lancaster, attracting over 1000 guests to the area each weekend. While they were able to successfully maintain operations through the immense challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the revenue and resources went into sustaining programming. The building itself requires major structural and cosmetic repairs. A structural inspection has revealed concerns with the fly system and the

stage that must be repaired for the safety of the performers. The HVAC system is no longer functioning and the electricity in the auditorium is old, causing many of the circuits in the chandeliers and wall sconces to short. Additionally, the woodwork, carpeting, curtains, plaster and paint are showing decades of wear and tear. Providing these updates will improve performer and audience safety, and increase the ability of the Opera House to fulfill its mission and serve visitors a vibrant arts experience.



### Exterior Improvements

Window Replacement	\$	271,100
Painting Improvements	\$	20,540
Chimney Repair	\$	17,630
Paver Repairs Site Preparation	\$	10,580
Paver Repairs Site Improvements	\$	32,900
Entrance Canopy with Rigid Curtains	\$	35,945
Utility Improvements	\$	4,800
Construction/Engineering	\$	165,980
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>559,475</b>

### Interior Improvements

Stage Fly System/Stage Floor Repair	\$	40,000
Main Floor/Balcony Chair Replacement/Repair	\$	60,000
Main Auditorium Restoration	\$	300,000
Lobby Restoration	\$	150,000
Dressing Room Repair/Upgrades	\$	30,000
HVAC Replacement	\$	293,000
Upgrades to Theater Sound/LED Conversion	\$	120,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>993,000</b>

**Total** \$ 1,552,475

## ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Attracting a mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for community use and employment



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality



# Project 6

## Masonic Building

Healthy   
Historic   
Holistic 

Project Sponsors: Private Entity Partner  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$1,027,000  
Funding Match Opportunities: Private funds

### Exterior Improvements

Exterior Improvements (Masonry/Carpentry Repair)	\$ 45,000
Front Stairway Railings	\$ 8,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 53,000</b>

### Interior Improvements

Demo Office Walls (Basement)	\$ 20,000
Cutting/Patching/Painting (Basement)	\$ 15,000
Asbestos Floor Tile Remediation (Basement)	\$ 12,000
Handicap Accessible Bathrooms (Basement)	\$ 18,000
Sprinkler (Basement)	\$ 30,000
New Gym Flooring (Basement)	\$ 15,000
HVAC Improvements/Zoning (Basement)	\$ 250,000
Kitchen Area Upgrades (Exhaust) (Basement)	\$ 25,000
Handicap Accessible Bathrooms (1st floor level)	\$ 25,000
Sprinkler (1st floor level)	\$ 30,000
Bring Back Exit to Code for Fire Exit (1st floor level)	\$ 35,000
Exterior Elevator for Handicap Accessibility	\$ 375,000
Sprinkler System (Mezzanine)	\$ 15,000
New Fire Door out of Kitchenette (Mezzanine)	\$ 12,000
Handicap Accessible bathrooms (Upper Floor)	\$ 12,000
Sprinkler (Upper Floor)	\$ 30,000
Additional Exit Doors (Upper Floor)	\$ 45,000
Fire Enclosure & Fire Doors (Upper Floor)	\$ 10,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$ 974,000</b>

**Total** **\$ 1,027,000**

The historic Mason Building Temple (established 1916) is currently an unutilized gem in the historic district. No longer used by the Mason, the building has tremendous potential, but there is an extensive list of updates and repairs needed to bring the building into compliance for a new occupancy. Currently, a local business owner is ready to transform the building into a full-service wellness facility that contains trained and experienced professionals in areas including mental health therapy, nutrition training, physical therapy, energy work, and massage therapy, along with the current fitness offerings. Combining the efforts of all of these holistic professionals in to one space will allow for collaborative offerings focused on total wellness, as well as cooking demonstrations, functional movement for our senior population, an expanded stress management offering, and the ability to cater to other demographics in need. The plans for the property are in negotiations, and the NY Forward funding will contribute to needed facility renovation to bring the building to compliance.



### ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Attracting a mix of shopping, entertainment, and service options for community use and employment



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality



Supporting a diverse population with diverse housing & employment opportunities



Growing the local property tax base

# Project 7

## Mobility Hub

Healthy   
Historic   
Holistic 

Project Sponsors: Village of Lancaster  
Readiness Indicators: Feasibility Study, Site Plans  
Estimated Project Cost: \$451,972  
Funding Match Opportunities: GBNRTC, NFTA

### Utility

New Electrical Service	\$	15,000
------------------------	----	--------

<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>15,000</b>
-----------------	-----------	---------------

### Contractual Expenses

Site Lighting (Includes wiring)	\$	16,000
---------------------------------	----	--------

Milling (2-1/2 inches)	\$	32,160
------------------------	----	--------

New Top Course Asphalt Resurfacing	\$	40,500
------------------------------------	----	--------

Site Drainage Rehabilitation	\$	15,000
------------------------------	----	--------

EV Charging Station Electrical, Install and Bases	\$	30,000
---------------------------------------------------	----	--------

Site Work and Concrete Pad for Bike Lockers	\$	27,000
---------------------------------------------	----	--------

Site Work and Concrete Pad for Bike Docking Stations	\$	10,000
------------------------------------------------------	----	--------

Signage Including Installation	\$	2,000
--------------------------------	----	-------

New Striping	\$	6,500
--------------	----	-------

Park Bench Installed	\$	1,250
----------------------	----	-------

Bike Locker and Repair Stand Install	\$	17,500
--------------------------------------	----	--------

Bike Docking Stations Install	\$	6,500
-------------------------------	----	-------

<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>204,410</b>
-----------------	-----------	----------------

### Equipment

EV Charging Stations	\$	110,000
----------------------	----	---------

Enclosed Bike Locker with Repair Stand	\$	25,000
----------------------------------------	----	--------

Bike Docking Stations	\$	6,000
-----------------------	----	-------

<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>141,000</b>
-----------------	-----------	----------------

### Other

Design/Construction Contingency	\$	54,062
---------------------------------	----	--------

Testing/Inspections	\$	2,500
---------------------	----	-------

Engineering	\$	35,000
-------------	----	--------

<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>91,562</b>
-----------------	-----------	---------------

<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>451,972</b>
--------------	-----------	----------------

Creation of the Village's Mobility Hub will ease current concerns about parking and transportation in the business district, by providing transportation alternatives, as well as retaining sufficient parking spaces. The location of the Hub is within a low-income census block k, ensuring easy access and availability for low-income residents, who are often left out of such transportation options.

The Mobility Hub will facilitate use of alternatives to personal automobiles, and allow for increased travel to, from, and within the Village using multiple modes such as bicycles, walking, public transit, and rideshare options. The site will include electric vehicle charging stations, bicycle facilities, and a centralized-rideshare location in the center of the business district, assisting both residents and visitors with transportation to and from that area. Implementation of this project will improve mobility options for persons living in and around the Hub, reduce environmental and energy impacts from single occupant vehicles, and increase the economic development of the Village. The Hub will also be tied to the planned electronic wayfinding system, which will help promote the local businesses.



## ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by creating walkable development patterns



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality



# Project 8

## Wayfinding

Healthy ✓  
Historic ✓  
Holistic ✓

Project Sponsors: Village of Lancaster  
Readiness Indicators: Existing Conditions Report  
Estimated Project Cost: \$235,000  
Funding Match Opportunities: Village Funds, Erie County Cultural Capital Fund



Walkability is a priority in the Village of Lancaster. The Village has taken many steps to enhance walkability, from the construction of complete streets to the addition of Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons. However, a well-planned, comprehensive wayfinding system has been a vital missing element, which would make the Village accessible to everyone. In addition to traditional finger-pointing pedestrian signs, interpretive signs, map kiosks and vehicular signs, the Village imagines the 21st Century Downtown will include a Smart City Digital Sign, allowing for customizable wayfinding, real time community messaging, and public service announcements. This zero-emission technology aligns with the community's climate smart initiatives. Additionally, the Village will focus on the gateways into the community, including a transformative enhancement to the overpass that serves as the gateway into the Central Business District. Committed to supporting the arts, the Village looks forward to a community involved process to determine the artwork for this important gateway.

### Improvements

2 Interpretive Signs (includes sign fabrication and installation)	\$	14,000
4 Vehicular Signs (includes sign fabrication and installation)	\$	18,000
1 Map Kiosk (includes sign fabrication and installation)	\$	15,000
3 Finger Pointing Pedestrian Signs (includes sign fabrication and installation)	\$	33,000
Overpass Painting	\$	125,000
1 Soofa Smart City Digital Sign	\$	30,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>235,000</b>

### ALIGNMENT WITH NY FORWARD GOALS



Creating an active downtown & sense of place



Enhancing public spaces that serve the existing community and those around the region



Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by creating walkable development patterns



Providing amenities that support and enhance downtown living and quality

# Administrative Capacity



Though a small government, the Village of Lancaster uses its resources wisely and has created a sustainable infrastructure that remains strong, even when new Trustees are elected to the Village Board. As illustrated in recent news clippings (see collage) and support letters, the Village has been awarded County, State, and Federal funds, and has successfully executed projects in a range of categories that demonstrate the

Village's ability to select and hire contractors, execute planning and construction projects, and successfully perform all required administration in the execution of these projects. All Village officials are fully supportive of this NY Forward application and are committed to implementing the described strategic investments that will lead to continued economic growth and a better quality of life for all.

A team of experienced Village personnel have joined the Mayor and Village Board to bring the NY Forward application to completion and will continue to oversee the implementation phases of planning and execution. This team was led by Mayor Lynne Ruda, who was first elected to the Board in March 2017 and became Director of Economic Development in April 2017. She became mayor in 2021 and has played an active role in regional administration, including forming and chairing the Climate Smart Committee for the Erie County Association of Governments.

*"The Village of Lancaster is highly capable of successfully implementing the NY Forward goals, as they are well governed, have excellent technical and administrative support and are able to organize needed finance as well as local businesses and developers. Their demonstrated success in deployment of previous plans and projects further indicates their ability."*

~Hal Morse, GBNRTC

Michael Stegmeier is the Village of Lancaster Clerk/ Treasurer and has worked for the Village since 2006. He has overseen the overall administration of all grants listed on page 4 and would be responsible for financial administration of the NY Forward award and serve as the primary point of contact. Mike serves as the Budget Director and Chief Fiscal Officer for the Village, including the management and oversight of

department budgets and long-term financial planning. He is also the Climate Smart Coordinator, managing projects and initiatives to promote environmental awareness and provide sustainability and resiliency against future changing climate conditions. In addition to overseeing a staff of 3, Mike works closely with Sarah Meredith, the Grants Manager, who ensures that the Village grant awards proceed in a timely fashion, including submission of necessary reports.

The Village also has a number of active committees that include residents/ volunteers and are responsible for specific areas of concern, including historic preservation, environmental issues, and economic development. The Village will call on their knowledge and resources to assist with direction and implementation of the NY Forward Initiatives during the implementation process.

## THANK YOU!

The Village of Lancaster's vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown "Healthy, Historic, Holistic" is focused on putting people first. It is about building a community that is strong and sustainable. The vision is a representation of the community's desire to see a long-awaited revitalization and is reflected in the tremendous public turnout for every public meeting and outreach event that is offered. The leaders of the Village of Lancaster have worked hard, putting in countless hours, embracing New York State and the REDC's initiatives, and have worked to build strong partnerships throughout the region. Through each and every step of Village projects, from the planning to the ribbon cutting, the Village Board works together to build a better community and continuously dreams about the next step in this community's transformation. We are confident, as we have shown through the many successful projects that have been completed and a revitalization that has captured the attention of the region, that we are prepared for the next phase of our transformative vision that this funding would provide.







REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry Street; Suite 500  
Buffalo, New York 14203-3030  
September 16, 2022

Dear Director Utz:

I am writing this letter as staff in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC) is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Buffalo Niagara Region of New York State. The MPO is governed by representation of major political jurisdictions and agencies and is responsible for development of regional plans for land use and transportation. The MPO also collaboratively allocates funding for projects to advance the goals for the plans. Recent plans include the Regional Plan for Sustainable Development, an initiative funded and supported by HUD, EPA and USDOT, which was the precursor to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2050. These Plans recognize the value of our region's villages in terms of our regional economy, environmental sustainability and focused growth to reduce sprawl. GBNRTC also provides planning support to local governments and prioritizes funds for key projects. This support has helped the Village of Lancaster plan and deliver their successful economic and community development initiatives.

GBNRTC has worked diligently with the Village of Lancaster in support of their recent development activities, including deployment of bike lanes, West Main Street Expansion, and contemporary Roundabouts. We have seen success of these approaches and note the immediate positive impacts these treatments have had on the Village of Lancaster. The Village is pursuing additional plans and projects to assure continued success in economic development, we continue to participate in these activities including a village Mobility Hub, Smart Parking, Expanding the Central Ave Streetscape, updating their Zoning Code, Climate Smart Initiatives, Bike Trail expansion and others.

The Village of Lancaster is highly capable of successfully implementing the NY Forward goals, as they are well governed, have excellent technical and administrative support and are able to organize needed finance as well as local businesses and developers. Their demonstrated success in deployment of previous plans and projects further indicates their ability.

If you have any question regarding this proposal please feel free to call.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Hal Morse', is located below the text 'If you have any question regarding this proposal please feel free to call.'

Hal Morse, PMP  
Project Manager

# Erie County Environmental Management Council



Attn: Karen Utz  
REDC Regional Director  
95 Perry St.  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

September 16, 2022

Director Utz,

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. [The Erie County Environmental Management Council \(EMC\)](#) is an advisory board to the Erie County Department of Environment and Planning that helps advise County government on local environmental concerns. As a liaison between the community and county government our members are made of both municipal representation and at-large membership that provide subject matter expertise related to best practices in their particular field. EMC meetings provide a platform for inter-municipal coordination, education, and advisement on various projects that help move Erie County's environmental goals forward including Environmental Justice, addressing the impacts of climate change, land use, transportation, reducing the waste stream, and protecting our regional watersheds. The Village of Lancaster has been an active member of the EMC, and has developed this fantastic project in conjunction with best practices that the EMC encourages.

Our membership as well as our Chair have supported the Villages efforts to implement Complete Streets, reconnect their street grid including pedestrian considerations, roundabouts, bike lanes, bike parking, and many other mobility minded economic development opportunities. This application would allow the Village to build on several successful economic development projects in their downtown core including the West Main Street extension project and Cayuga Creek Park project that returns a former parking lot into a large downtown park that includes green space, multi-use paths, electric vehicle charging, public access to Cayuga Creek, and would be directly adjacent to the project in this application. Developed with our One Region Forward partners, the Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council (GBNRTC), this project would help address suburban access to our regional transportation system, and provide needed mobility options for a community that currently has limited access to the regional system.

As shown with their work with partners at the University at Buffalo's Regional Institute (UBRI), the GBNRTC, the EMC and others, the Village is a great candidate to leverage capacity building to successfully implement the NY Forward project. Their work with UBRI's technical assistance has resulted in Bronze Certification in the New York State Climate Smart Communities program as well as grant awards through NYSERDA's Clean Energy Communities program. Lancaster continues to pursue opportunities to make their community (and our Region) stronger through these people focused projects that provide opportunities to enhance the Historical Villages charm, build density through diverse housing choices, expanded economic development opportunities, and increase resilience in the Region.

The Erie County EMC urges you to approve the Village of Lancaster's New York Forward application. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or follow up that you may need.

All the Best,

Jason Kulaszewski,  
[jasonkul@buffalo.edu](mailto:jasonkul@buffalo.edu)  
Erie County EMC, Chair  
UBRI Clean Energy Coordinator





**GObike**  
BUFFALO

**Board of Directors**

Dr. Michael Cropp

Jon Dandes

Nicole Komin

Tim McMorro

Ryan McPherson

Kevin Murrett

Tonga Pham

Greg Stevens

Jen White

September 13, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry Street, Ste. 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Mrs. Utz,

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application.

GObike has been working in communities across WNY to build active mobility networks and culture through trails, greenways, and complete streets because we believe all WNY residents should enjoy equal access to safe, connected, and sustainable communities through a variety of mobility options free from stigma, fear and prohibitive expense.

The Greater Buffalo Niagara Regional Transportation Council's (GBNRTC) regional bicycle master plan (2020) identified the Lancaster Heritage Trail extension as one of the top 15 off-road corridors to prioritize for implementation in Erie and Niagara Counties. This 5.1-mile trail would close an off-road trail gap between the existing Lancaster Heritage Trail and the existing Lehigh Valley Railroad Rail Trail in Cheektowaga. With support from Assembly member Monica Wallace, GObike will be working with Lancaster to develop a feasibility study to advance the potential this corridor may have on improving the safety, access, health and environmental sustainability of the community.

The collaborative work in the village continues to set a strong precedent for towns and villages across WNY by developing a sustainable community that puts people first. Their track record of success demonstrates a strong commitment to delivering meaningful projects to enhance the quality of life of their community.

Thank you for consideration of their proposal.

Sincerely,

Justin Booth  
Executive Director



09/19/2022

Karen Utz  
REDC Regional Director  
95 Perry Street Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

Dear Director Utz:

David Bondrow  
*Artistic/Executive  
Director*

**Board of Trustees**

James B. Allein  
*President*

Debbie Blask  
*Vice-President*

John Trojanowsky  
*Treasurer*

Marcia Myszka  
*Secretary*

Nancy Farrell  
Anthony Garmone  
Kenneth Graber, Esq.  
Maryellen Kay  
Linda Koziol  
George MacKay  
Nancy Mariani

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has been committed to the idea of being healthy, historic, and holistic, and I have seen the projects and initiatives that have been embraced by the Village of Lancaster to help build our community into one that is vibrant and sustainable. The installation of traffic roundabouts in the downtown village and the creation of the park along the Cayuga Creek will create a walkable and friendly atmosphere to complement the economic development in the area.

I serve as Artistic and Executive Director of the Lancaster Opera House. For over forty years, LOH has attracted over 30,000 people to the village each year with our events. We've succeeded in maintaining operations for many years (even withstanding the COVID-19 pandemic), but much of the revenue and resources have gone into programming. The building itself requires a revitalization, both cosmetically and structurally. We must provide a safe, attractive, and energy efficient space for our community to come together and experience the work of our many artists.

I am so pleased that the Village of Lancaster government recognizes Lancaster Opera House as a catalyst for economic development, cultural tourism, and as a key to the quality of life for residents. In addition to our interior projects, the Mayor and the Trustees have also been wonderful in proposing exterior improvements to the Opera House, through new signage and a grander entrance. LOH creates a real synergy, as we find guests look for a whole experience when they attend: where to eat, where to shop, and where to stay. Together we can make Lancaster a wonderful, sustainable village for many years to come.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "DB", written over a horizontal line.

David Bondrow  
Artistic/Executive Director





September 13, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St. Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Karen,

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has been committed to the idea of being healthy, historic, and holistic, and I have seen the projects and initiatives that have been embraced by the Village of Lancaster to help build our community into one that is vibrant and sustainable. The revitalization of West Main Street, for example, has brought to life the downtown Lancaster district that was lacking for many years. The area is now thriving with the resurrection of shops, restaurants, and business owners who have not only provided exceptional goods and services, but have also taken pride in their buildings. The growing district is quickly becoming a hub for activity, socialization, and a sense of pride among our community.

I am the Director of Operations for the Boys & Girls Club of Depew-Lancaster. My organization stands to benefit immensely if the Village of Lancaster is awarded this grant. Our current building was erected in 1905. Our organization purchased the building in 1956. In 1999, it was placed on the National Registry of Historic Places. Over the past 66 years, our organization has struggled with the challenging decisions on how to spend our donors' generosity. We are committed to bringing quality programs to the youth we serve, however, maintenance and capital improvements are imperative in a structure that is 117 years old. Many times, those improvements are neglected in order to provide quality youth programs and services. With this grant, we would be able to repair and update a host of issues that we face – including restoring the integrity of the outside of the building, as well as adding new program space on the inside in order to increase our capacity and service more youth and families in our community. Some of these issues include repairs to the roof, soffits, and windows as well as critical electrical upgrades.

#### Administrative Office

David A. Hoch, Executive Director  
Jeff Kupka, Director of Operations  
60 Preston Street  
Depew, New York 14043  
(716) 683-8755 Phone  
(716) 683-9816 Fax

#### George R. Crego Unit

Jeff Kupka, Club Director  
David Lewandowski, Program Director  
Jeffrey Lorka, Program Director  
60 Preston Street  
Depew, New York 14043  
(716) 683-5266 Phone

#### Earle M. Scott Unit

Jeremy Konst, Club Director  
Lisa Konst, Individual Service Director  
5440 Broadway  
Lancaster, New York 14086  
(716) 683-1485 Phone

#### Aaron M. Keneflick Unit

Samantha Garson, Club Director  
275 Alexander Ave  
Cheektowaga, New York 14211  
(716) 931-5822 Phone

#### Officers

David Lyman  
President

Adam Stotz  
1st Vice-President

Kevin Corcoran  
Treasurer

#### Board of Directors

Michael J. Brown  
Jack Carlson  
Phyllis Dickinson  
Larry Evola  
Brian Gould  
Cal Harte  
Mike Heer  
Donald Hibbs  
Lisa Jerebiko  
Beth Kaiser  
Tim Kelly  
David Konst  
Edward Myszk  
Chris Schunk  
Joann Thaesler  
Susan Thaesler  
Cory Zale



A United Way Agency

Visit us at [depewlancasterbgc.org](http://depewlancasterbgc.org)  
GREAT FUTURES START HERE

Over the past month, representatives from our organization have been meeting with the Village of Lancaster Mayor, Lynne Ruda and Councilmember, Cyndi Maciejewski. Their passion regarding this project has shown through and they have been instrumental in including our organization in the process. We have leaned on them for support with ideas and guidelines as we explore sensible ways to improve the safety and security of all who enter our premises, while continuing to provide the services that we offer. This grant would provide us with a tremendous opportunity to set up future generations with a healthy and strong environment for programs and curriculum without the stress of an aging structure that could prevent the implementation of some of those programs.

As a lifelong Lancaster-area resident, I believe that renovating the business district is beneficial to the entire Village. A good community provides high quality of life for all who live there. It provides a healthy and welcoming environment that is safe, cohesive, and prosperous. With some of the current work that has been done in the Village Business District, community leaders and members can already see the difference from the past. Village events are well attended, and the sense of community pride is noticeable. I would be thrilled to be a part of a grant and project that would be so beneficial to not only my organization that I am so proud of, but also to my personal love for my village and community.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeff Kupka  
Depew-Lancaster Boys & Girls Club, Inc.





10 Aurora Street  
Suite 700  
Lancaster, NY 14086

September 16, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry Street  
Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Ms. Utz:

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has been committed to the idea of being healthy, historic and holistic and I have seen the projects and initiatives that have been embraced by the Village of Lancaster to help build our community into one that is vibrant and sustainable. Just a few examples of these recent initiatives are the addition of bikes lanes on Central Avenue and the addition of the Outdoor Fitness Center on West Drullard.

I am both a business owner and resident within the Village of Lancaster and foresee the use of this grant money, should it be awarded to our village, used to elevate the growth and renewal already happening.

I own a boutique gym and wellness center within the village and an expansion of this business is part of the proposed use of the NY Forward Grant. My facility is currently offering a wide range of fitness offerings with plans to expand from just the physical spoke of the wellness wheel to covering all areas of holistic health (spiritual, social, emotional, environmental, occupational, etc.). Just within my sector of this proposed project, we will be adding up to 8 additional businesses as resources of holistic health that our community is hungry for. That hunger has been exacerbated by the COVID pandemic.

The vision is to have a full-service wellness facility that contains trained and experienced professionals covering all 8 spokes of the wellness wheel that our community (and beyond) can easily access, all within a beautifully historic building that needs to be an active part of our budding business district. These resources include (but are not limited to) mental health therapy, nutrition training, physical therapy, energy work, massage therapy along with the current fitness offerings. Combining the efforts of all of these holistic professionals in to one space will allow for collaborative offerings as well such as cooking demonstrations, functional movement for our senior population, an expanded stress management offering, an ability to cater to other demographics in need (cancer survivors, differently

abled bodies and minds, veterans, first responders etc.) Everyone needs a space they feel they belong, and this will be a place of gathering! We are already offering community-based events such as book clubs, clean living meetings and trauma informed Yoga. If there is a need in our community that is within my scope of practice, or within the scope of practice of another practitioner I know, I want to help meet it!

The Village Board and Mayor Ruda are active with the Village Merchants, and I was honored to have my project considered for this grant. I believe having this grant awarded to our Village will enhance the health, experience and joy of our community and to those that visit.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kelly J. Williams  
Owner



September 21, 2022

Ms. Karen Utz  
Western New York Regional Director  
Empire State Development  
95 Perry, Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

**Re:    *Village of Lancaster NY Forward Application***  
***Historic Masonic Temple***  
***5497 Broadway, Lancaster***

Dear Regional Director Utz,

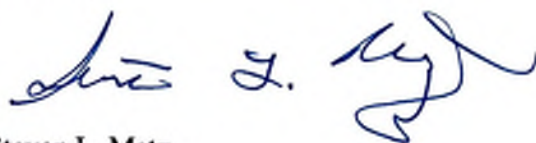
I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster NY Forward ("Program") application, which will facilitate the ongoing economic development occurring within the Village of Lancaster ("Village"). The Village has made exciting progress with economic development projects in the past several years and acceptance into this Program will go far to further catalyze future improvements.

The Program will directly support our adaptive reuse of the historic Masonic Temple located at 5497 Broadway in the Village ("Temple"). This historic property was constructed in 1916, and has a striking stone colonnade façade that is very supportive of the historic character of the Village. The Temple has been listed on the National Register of Historic Buildings, and is a Contributing Resource to the Broadway Historic District.

We have struggled to fully lease the 10,000 sq. ft. building due to the extent of improvements needed and the building has been consistently, partially-vacant for over 15 years. If accepted into the Program, we will be able to complete the major improvements to the exterior, interior and mechanical systems that are needed in order to garner a tenant that will be able to fully occupy the building. A fully occupied Temple will activate the property, streetscape, and Village, and support the extension of commerce beyond the current extents of the Village's downtown business district.

We have worked closely with the Village throughout this application process, and look forward to continuing that public-private partnership in order to benefit both our adaptive reuse of the Temple, and the ongoing economic development of the Village.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steven L. Metz". The signature is fluid and stylized, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Steven L. Metz

5497 Temple Lancaster LLC

September 13, 2022

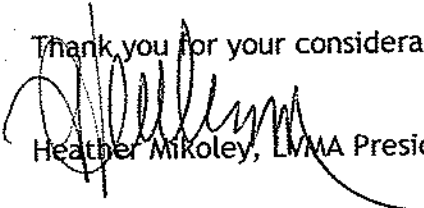
Attn: REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

The Lancaster Village Merchant Association (LVMA) was established the fall of 2021. Through a multi-faceted approach, our goal is to maximize the collective strength of business owners, property owners, government, residents and those interested in the well-being of the Village.

We are writing this letter on behalf of the LVMA in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has undergone a major transformation and renaissance in the past four years and continues to work and strive to improve the Central Business District (CBD). The W. Main St. Expansion has allowed the development of the Lancaster Village Center, which has brought six new storefronts, and 18 upscale apartments to the CBD. This has brought a marked increase in residents patronizing the Village business as well as more businesses and vitality to the CBD. Some businesses have stated the expansion of the street increased their new customers to such a degree it was like a second grand opening. Other projects like the addition of the roundabouts, planters and hanging baskets on Central Ave and W. Main St., and the completion of Cayuga Creek Park will assuredly result in even more impact, progress and overall increase in the quality of life for Village residents and businesses plus more visitors for other areas to the Village as well.

The Lancaster Village Board Trustees and Mayor Ruda have welcomed the presence of the LVMA at Village Board Meetings and other planning meetings. They are inclusive and look for our input when discussing topics that will directly impact our businesses such as Village Events scheduling, changes to Village Code, construction projects, etc. Trustee Cindy Maciejewski meets with our organization regularly to help ensure event applications and necessary details are taken care of to make the events run smoothly. With all the construction occurring, the communication from the Village Board has been very important and appreciated to help us engage the businesses affected and to ensure any negative impact is minimized. That said, we as an organization are in full support of the renovation of the Central Business District and the Village of Lancaster's pursuit of the NY Forward Grant to continue our growth and make our historic village a destination choice for our residents and for visitors from all over as well!

Thank you for your consideration,

  
Heather Mikoley, LVMA President

  
Patricia Marshall, LVMA Vice President





Glassco Management, LLC  
PO Box 454  
Amherst, New York 14226  
716-249-4348

September 14, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

RE: NY Forward Grant Program 2022

Dear Director Karen Utz:

This letter is in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. A few years ago, Glassco Management selected the Village of Lancaster to focus our development efforts on as Lancaster is our home and community. It was an underserved and untapped market with beautiful historic resources that had been maintained by a Historic Preservation Commission since the 1980s. With the change in the way people consume, we knew that Lancaster could be something special, but the landscape and community had its challenges. West Main Street didn't exist as it did years ago, and the community wanted it back. Development was difficult but with a great public/private partnership between Village Government and Glassco Management, it was possible to invest and move the community forward.

The Village of Lancaster has undergone a tremendous transformation in the past four years. The implementation of bike paths, grants supporting the extension of the West Main Street, the CMAQ Grant for roundabouts that is underway, and the Cayuga Creek Park Project are just some of the examples of commitment and execution that the Village leaders and our community have embraced. Without these key projects being funded through grants it would not be possible for us to make the kind of impact necessary to support local business. The community has been trying to achieve these objectives for more than 25 years.

From the very beginning our Village leaders including Lynne Ruda, Dawn Robinson and others reached out and worked with us to understand our needs. The Village also shared their vision for growth combined with Historical Preservation. When working on our Phase 1 project, the Mayor and Trustees were able to broadcast the public meetings, which then allowed us to actively participate so that we could better understand what the community wanted. Also, we worked together in those settings to make recommendations that would benefit both the community and our efforts making it possible to achieve a better outcome. The business district is now clearly thriving with new businesses opening frequently. Our Village now has the walkability and character which drives all of our Village residents and beyond to enjoy the services we offer. Our job is not over and there is much to do as this rebirth of activity is fragile. Continued support of these efforts is critical and will help us to be successful breathing life into the community every day.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at the number above.

Thank you

Regards,

Tommy R. Sweeney  
President and CEO  
Glassco Management, LLC

# Dark Forest Chocolate Makers, Inc.

September 12, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

RE: NY Forward Grant - Letter of Support

Dark Forest Chocolate opened our shop in the Village of Lancaster in 2015. We chose our location in the Village's Central Business District (CBD) for two reasons. The Village had plans to improve its infrastructure and we saw a trend for retail business to move out of malls and strip plazas and back into traditional village centers. This was the best decision we made since there have been significant improvements the Village has made that have improved the CBD. Our West Main Street streetscape has been redone improving the sidewalks and parking, and recreating the original alignment. In addition, there is a park and roundabout under construction at this time. These improvements have helped to bolster the success of our business and have created a regional buzz about Lancaster.

Lancaster is in a period of rapid change. We believe that in this era of "work from home", Lancaster offers the amenities that residents want with excellent schools, open spaces, and a vibrant CBD. Recent increases in population bear out this view and we expect this to continue. This is why support from the state at this time is critical.

The Village of Lancaster government has done a fantastic job of supporting the businesses by holding events, supporting our events, and helping us with regulatory hurdles. More can be done though to help attract more businesses and residents to the area. We feel that ***the Village has a unique group of forward-thinking staff and elected officials that work together for the betterment of our community, (a rarity in our polarized world) and that they can effectively plan and implement improvements in the public interest.*** We feel that improvements to the Village of Lancaster will have regional benefits and we strongly encourage your support of these efforts.

Sincerely,



Danny Sundell  
Dark Forest Chocolate

Office: 5888 Broadway St. Lancaster, NY 14086  
Shop: 11 West Main St. Lancaster, NY 14086  
716-288-9167 [www.darkforestchocolate.com](http://www.darkforestchocolate.com)





September 13, 2022

Attn: REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

Lilly Belle Meads was the second farm meadery in New York State and the first meadery in Erie County. We are proud to have Lancaster as both our business location and our home. We have been happily serving craft meads to the Village of Lancaster from our taproom as well as selling and distributing them to the surrounding areas of Western New York for 5 years now.

We are writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. It has been exciting to be involved in the renaissance occurring in the Village of Lancaster over the past five years. Lancaster truly is going through a rebirth with an evolving landscape. Projects like the extension of W. Main St. and development Cayuga Creek Park have attracted new and exciting businesses and increasing foot traffic directly in front of ours as well. Being one of those unique businesses and as the Village of Lancaster continues its progress, we are confident that we will attract more residents, visitors and businesses and truly become a welcoming and sought out destination within our region.

Over the past 5 years, Lilly Belle Meads and the Village Board of Trustees have worked together on a few impactful projects including: revising Village Code to make it more pertinent and relevant to current businesses; providing Village resources for use during our recent Renaissance Faire; and working to establish the framework for a Merchant Association. Lilly Belle Meads continues to look forward to working with the Village Board to optimize the Village of Lancaster into an attractive & wonderful enticement for residents and visitors.

Thank you for your attention,

Joseph & Patricia Marshall, co-owners Lilly Belle Meads

Gilded Maple, LLC  
4 West Main Street  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
716-983-3334

September 18, 2022

Ms. Karen Utz  
REDC Regional Director  
95 Perry Street  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY 14203

RE: Village of Lancaster NY Forward application

Dear Ms. Utz:


I am a 22-year resident of the Village of Lancaster, and the proud owner of a small business, Gilded Maple. We opened our store on West Main Street in the Village of Lancaster in June 2018. We are a small boutique, specializing in home décor, women's clothing, and gifts.

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. In the four years since we have opened, the Village has seen an amazing transformation. Just a few years ago, there were many vacancies on West Main Street and Central Avenue. But, since we've opened, we can count at least nine new additional retail and service small businesses that have since opened for business in the Village of Lancaster Central Business District. *This is progress that this Village has not seen since the 1950's*, and we need to keep this momentum going. Our store attracts shoppers from throughout WNY, and our customers are constantly amazed at the progress they have seen in the Village over the past few years.

The Village has seen a great combination of investment from both the private and public sector. Small business owners have invested a great amount of money into this community (not to mention blood, sweat and tears). Our Village officials have held up their end of the bargain, by being engaged within the community, and by supporting us whenever necessary.

We must all work together to ensure that this success is not short-lived, and the NY Forward program would be a great next step in fulfilling that mission.

Sincerely,



Heather Mikoley  
Gilded Maple





## The Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce

### EXECUTIVE BOARD

Tommy R. Sweeney – Board Chair  
Glassco Management, LLC

Deborah Glowny – Board Vice Chair  
Bank on Buffalo

Brittany Leighbody – Treasurer  
716 Athletics

Lisa Eisensmith – Secretary  
PCB Piezotronics

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Audrey Hamernik  
Tops Friendly Markets

Joseph Keefe, Esq.  
Attorney at Law

Irene Kanutsu  
Retired Volunteer

Shannon McNichol  
Nichol City Realty

Brandon Pope  
Alden State Bank

James Allein  
President Lancaster Opera House

Ron Adamczak  
Hoffman Hanafin Insurance

Sally Stier  
Clarity Group

Jess Nikonoeicz  
Retired Mayor of Depew

### CHAMBER STAFF

Derek Pew  
Director of Member Services

Debbie Blask  
Member Services Assoicate

## *“Building a Better Business Community by Connecting People, Ideas and Resources”*

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

RE: New York Forward Grant

To Director Karen Utz,

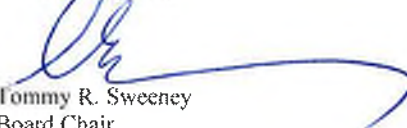
The Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce serves the Greater Lancaster, Depew, and Elma communities. Its mission is to actively support and promote business, industry, institutions, organizations, and individuals in the effort to enhance and strengthen the quality of life for the Business Community and residents of the villages of Depew and Lancaster and the towns of Lancaster and Elma. Some of the main activities we facilitate to achieve this objective include 6 signature events annually that bring folks together and create business networking opportunities and strengthen the bonds between those members. Also, there are dozens of opportunities in smaller forums to gain access to training, programing, and informational sessions that we organize and offer as well as through organizations like the Better Business Bureau and relationships with local leaders. This is along with directory and other services. All of this to promote and grow the business community in the greater Lancaster Area.

The Village of Lancaster Mayor and Trustees have been extensively involved in support the Chamber and business community. They regularly participate in our signature events like the Annual State of the Town and Villages event that we host each year. Also, they participate in our new business ribbon cuttings and regularly provide opportunities that come across with the Chamber to share with our membership. They are a community partner in every way.

We are writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has been the economic hub for the Village as well as the Town of Lancaster, and the surrounding areas that we support. The Village has undergone a significant transformation in the past several years. The leadership of the Village has taken on very successful projects like the Annual Garden Walk / Beautification Program, Grants projects including the Bike Path extension, West Main Street extension, CMAQ Roundabout Project, and Cayuga Creek Park Project. These improvements help influence the economic growth we are starting to experience.

Continued renovations and investment are necessary in the business district to our older stock of buildings, facilities, and other services. The Village is in a delicate recovery state. The shift of our consumers spending habits will eventually assist in the recovery process from years of decline and that is why these grant opportunities help to incentivize economic recovery. Each new or improved business and building builds upon one another and we look forward to a place that is full of people working, shopping, playing, and living here. We fully support growth in a community such as this.

Our Best Regards,

  
Tommy R. Sweeney  
Board Chair  
Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce

TOWN OF LANCASTER  
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
21 Central Avenue  
Lancaster, NY 14086  
(716) 684-3342

web: [lancasternyida.com](http://lancasternyida.com)

September 16, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St , Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

**Re: Town of Lancaster Industrial Development Agency Support  
of the Village of Lancaster's "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown" application**


Dear Ms. Utz:

As the chairman of the Lancaster Industrial Development Agency, I am writing this letter in support of "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown" application that the Village of Lancaster will be submitting as a part of the NY Forward program. The mission of the Lancaster IDA is to promote a stable business environment by assisting qualified companies with modernization and expansion projects, therefore enabling these companies to expand their business presence and to remain economically viable.

From an IDA perspective, the planning and initiatives undertaken by the Village of Lancaster have had a direct economic development impact within the downtown core. The extension of West Main Street enabled the first LIDA induced project in the Village of Lancaster downtown in decades. The Lancaster Village Center project application was approved for a total project amount of \$12 million dollars, with a first phase capital investment of \$2,000,000 and the creation of 20 jobs. The first phase was recently completed, and it has been exciting to see new businesses opening in the downtown core.

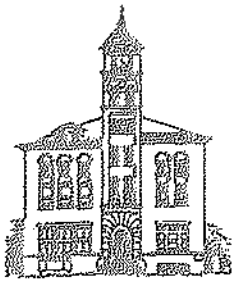
The Village of Lancaster has continued its commitment to planning and has engaged in several planning efforts that will help with the next phase of development within this community. From updating their zoning code to a form-based code, to the initiatives of the Climate Smart Task Force, to participating in the Comprehensive Plan oversight committee to name a few. The Village of Lancaster remains committed to the idea of creating the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown, that is centered in a vision that is healthy, historic and holistic. I am confident that if awarded the NY Forward funding, the Village of Lancaster will take the same passionate, engaging, fast paced approach to turn around transformative projects.

Sincerely,



Dino Fudoli  
LIDA Chairman

DF:lb



# Town of Lancaster

OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

21 Central Avenue  
Lancaster, New York 14086  
(716) 683-1610  
Fax: (716) 683-0512

**RONALD RUFFINO, SR.**  
*Supervisor*

September 19, 2022

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry St  
Suite 500  
Buffalo NY, 14203-3030

Dear Ms. Utz,

I am writing this letter in full support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application, "The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown". The Village of Lancaster and Town of Lancaster worked together in planning efforts in 2018 when the municipalities joined together to rewrite our Joint Comprehensive Plan. Since that point, the Village of Lancaster has focused a tremendous amount of energy into completing projects that fall in line with the community vision and the recommendations outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Town Hall is located in the heart of the downtown business district within the Village of Lancaster, and I have had a front row seat to the remarkable transformation that has been happening in the past few years. I am well aware of the vision that the Village of Lancaster has to continue the momentum and to create the vibrant downtown that it once was.

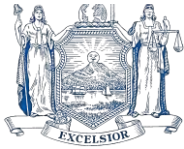
Having attended countless groundbreaking and ribbon cutting ceremonies in the last couple of years, I can personally attest to the success that the Village of Lancaster has had in being a catalyst for economic development. The Village has done an impressive job of garnering community support for some transformative, but potentially controversial projects, like the roundabout project. Mayor Ruda and her Trustees genuinely believe in transparency and continually host public meetings, post on social media and in their newsletter to keep the residents informed and engaged in the projects that they undertake.

The Village of Lancaster has continued its commitment to planning and has engaged in several planning efforts that will help with the next phase of development within this community. From updating their zoning code to a form-based code, to the impressive climate smart initiatives of the Climate Smart Task Force, to participating in the Comprehensive Plan oversight committee, the Village of Lancaster remains committed to the idea of creating the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Downtown, that is centered in a vision that is healthy, historic and holistic. I am confident that if awarded the NY Forward funding, the Village of Lancaster will take the same passionate, engaging, fast paced approach to turn around transformative projects.

Best regards,

Ronald Ruffino, Sr.  
Lancaster Town Supervisor





THE ASSEMBLY  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
ALBANY

VICE CHAIR  
Majority Steering  
COMMITTEES  
Governmental Operations  
Judiciary  
Local Governments  
Science & Technology  
Transportation  
Veterans' Affairs

MONICA WALLACE  
Assemblymember 143<sup>rd</sup> District  
Erie County

September 19, 2022

Ms. Karen Utz  
Regional Director  
Regional Economic Development Council  
95 Perry Street  
Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203

Dear Ms. Utz:

I am writing to you today to express my support for the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster is an ideal candidate for the NY Forward funding. Over the past four years, the village has undergone a tremendous transformation. These transformations have included everything from the West Main Street expansion project, adding bike lanes on Central Avenue, continuing beautification projects within the village, adding park equipment, increasing the walkability of the community, implementing roundabouts, expanding the small business corridor of the village, and so much more. Collectively, these projects have infused new life into a village that – only a few short years ago – consisted primarily of vacant storefronts. Now, the village is thriving with increased foot traffic and shoppers heading to one of the many new stores and restaurants that have recently opened their doors. Awarding NY Forward funding to the village would allow it to continue this momentum in advancing the economic development and revitalization of the entire village community.

The Village of Lancaster is currently in the process of overseeing numerous ongoing infrastructure projects that are part of its comprehensive revitalization efforts. This includes installing new roundabouts, installing traffic calming measures and creating a more welcoming pedestrian-friendly and bicycle-friendly environment. I've helped the village secure funding to assist with these upgrades, including funding to upgrade a pedestrian park located adjacent to the village. In addition, I'm currently seeking to extend the existing Lancaster Heritage Trail (which currently runs from the village eastward toward Alden) with an existing rail trail located in the Town of Cheektowaga. When completed, this will create one continuous 13-mile bike path that will run from western Cheektowaga east to the Village of Lancaster and beyond, and provide additional opportunities to attract bicyclists and others to the village community. This funding will help the Village of Lancaster's long-term vision of increasing the walkability and accessibility; it will also help provide additional public gathering spaces for all to use.

The Village has dedicated elected officials who are committed to ensuring these projects are successfully implemented. Indeed, village leadership has already demonstrated their ability to successfully complete grant projects timely and efficiently. For example, the village used its \$2.5 million award by NYS's Empire State Development Growth Grant to create the West Main Street expansion project, which opened an entire corridor that ultimately attracted new businesses, restaurants and housing. I have the utmost confidence that the award of NY Forward funding will permit village officials to continue fulfilling the revitalization efforts, including the much needed upgrades to the historic Lancaster Opera House and Town Hall, as well as adding a mobility hub, enhancing the Central Avenue streetscape, and restoring the Lancaster Historical Museum.

Finally, I would be remiss if I failed to mention how important these revitalization efforts are to the many seniors in the community who call the village home. The Lancaster Towers apartment complex sits in the heart of the village and is home to many senior citizens who lack vehicle transportation. These walkability and mobility upgrades are critical to folks who rely on their ability to walk to the drug store, the grocery store, the butcher, the barber, the bakery, and the theater – all of which are located within a block or two to the apartment complex. In reaching our economic development goals, we must be mindful to ensure that the community remains welcoming to everyone. The Village of Lancaster has demonstrated its commitment to doing just that.

I greatly appreciate your consideration of this NY Forward application submitted to Regional Economic Development Council by the Village of Lancaster. If you have any questions regarding my support, please contact me at 716-686-0080.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Monica Wallace". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Monica P. Wallace  
Member of Assembly  
Assembly District 143

THE SENATE  
STATE OF NEW YORK  
SENATOR PATRICK M. GALLIVAN  
59TH DISTRICT

September 12, 2022

Ms. Karen Utz  
REDC Regional Director  
95 Perry St.  
Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Ms. Utz,

I am writing in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has undergone a tremendous transformation over the past several years, which has supported economic development and community growth. Successful projects include West Main Street expansion and revitalization of the Village's central business district, restoration of the historic streetscape, new bike lanes and roundabouts to improve traffic flow.

The Village of Lancaster has proven it can manage and complete such projects efficiently. This is testament to the planning that goes into creating a realistic vision for the entire community, the ability to garner public support for projects and having the internal capacity to oversee projects through to completion. In addition to the projects listed above, the Village is overseeing the successful development of Cayuga Creek Park and other efforts to improve the quality of life for area residents.

I fully support the Village of Lancaster's application for funding to help facilitate important community project. I am confident in the ability of village leaders to utilize NY Forward funding for the good of Lancaster residents and I ask that you give the application your full consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact my office at 716-656-8544 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,



Patrick M. Gallivan  
Senator - 59<sup>th</sup> District





# ERIE COUNTY LEGISLATURE

September 19, 2022

HON. FRANK J. TODARO  
LEGISLATOR  
8<sup>TH</sup> DISTRICT

REDC Regional Director Karen Utz  
95 Perry Street  
Suite 500  
Buffalo, NY 14203-3030

Dear Director Utz,

I am writing this letter in support of the Village of Lancaster's NY Forward application. The Village of Lancaster has undergone a tremendous transformation in the past four years. Some projects that have supported economic development the most are the W. Main St. Expansion project, new Bike Lanes on Central Ave, new roundabouts, planters and hanging baskets to beautify the downtown area, and the development of Cayuga Creek Park. These projects have all received very positive feedback from the community.

I have obtained funding and have supported the Village of Lancaster, and in return, they have been able to enhance the revitalization efforts in our community. The Village of Lancaster has proven that they are successfully able to receive funding and efficiently turn that funding into a completed project. This is a testament to the amount of planning that goes into creating a realistic vision for the entire community, the ability to garner public support for projects before even applying for funding, and having the internal capacity to oversee projects through to completion.

If awarded, the Village of Lancaster is undoubtedly capable of successfully implementing the NY Forward goals because of its forward-thinking and innovative ideas to improve its community.

Please contact me at 681-2071 or email [Frank.Todaro@erie.gov](mailto:Frank.Todaro@erie.gov) if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank J. Todaro". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Frank J. Todaro  
Erie County Legislator  
8<sup>th</sup> District  
Alden | Lancaster | Bowmansville | Depew | Cheektowaga



# COUNTY OF ERIE

**MARK C. POLONCARZ**

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

ERIE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

DANIEL R. CASTLE, AICP  
COMMISSIONER

THOMAS E. BAINES, ESQ  
DEPUTY COMMISSIONER

September 21, 2022

Lynne T. Ruda  
Mayor, Village of Lancaster  
5423 Broadway  
Lancaster, NY 14086

RE: Letter of Support for the Village of Lancaster

Dear Mayor Ruda:

Erie County is in full support of the Village of Lancaster's pursuit of a NY Forward Funding grant. The Village of Lancaster has been working with Erie County since late 2021 on pursuing funding for a housing/commercial space development. The development may include housing units with mixed income, which would include housing for low to moderate income people along with market rate units. Erie County has received \$3,442,215 in federal Home Investment Partnership Grant (HOME) ARP funding. The purpose of these funds is to offer grants to developers of affordable housing units. The Village of Lancaster has attended two housing forums and several informational meetings conducted by Erie County on how to apply for these funds. The Village will be issuing its own an RFP for development in the near future and will be seeking Erie County's HOME ARP funds also.

Erie County is in strong support of a NY Forward funding grant for the Village of Lancaster.

Should you have additional questions or inquiries please contact Paul D'Orlando at (716) 858-2194.  
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Daniel R. Castle", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Daniel R. Castle, AICP  
Commissioner

DC/nb

Cc: Paul D'Orlando, Principal Contract Monitor